

REMARKS

REJECTION UNDER 35 USC 112

Claims 34-36 were rejected under 35 USC 112, on the grounds that they are both (i) indefinite and unclear, and (ii) unsupported by the specification. Accordingly, they are amended herein to clarify their coverage.

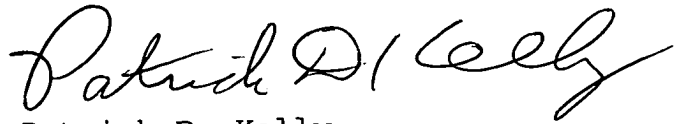
Due to an election that was made in the parent application, the claims being examined have been restricted to membrane claims, rather than device or surgical implant claims, in this "request for continuing examination". Therefore, amended claims 34-36 are now explicitly limited to "semi-permeable membrane segments". The membranes themselves do not need to be made of a chemical compound that would be classified as a "hydrogel"; however, one of the limitations on such membranes segments is that, in order to be covered by the claims herein, they must be attached to a hydrogel material.

That was not the initial focus of the main portion and teachings of the specification; however, that has become the main focus of the Applicant's recent and current research, and there is sufficient support in the combined specification and drawings for claims to membrane segments that are attached to hydrogel materials. Please note also that the teachings of US patent 6,530,956 (which arose from application serial number 09/393,522) were incorporated, by reference, into the teachings of the current application (on page 2). That issued patent contains both: (1) an entire section on semi-permeable membrane materials, beginning at column 18, line 42, and (2) numerous mentions of hydrogels, throughout the text of that issued patent.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is believed that the claims, as amended, are now in condition for allowance. If any questions remain, please contact the undersigned attorney at 314-822-8558.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Patrick D. Kelly". The signature is fluid and elegant, with the first name "Patrick" being more prominent than the last name "Kelly".

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